

HELPING NEW JERSEY STUDENTS ON THEIR PATH TO PROSPERITY

“As we struggle to meet the mandates imposed on us by state and federal government, we need the business community to reinforce the message that our students—and their parents—need to hear: middle and high school years are important and are an opportunity to build a foundation for the rest of their lives.”—Principal, New Jersey High School

Giving classrooms the tools for Deeper Learning. Since 1996, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation (NJCCF) has been working to ensure that students across the state are graduating high school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the 21st Century workforce—whether that means a post-secondary degree or the skills to help them problem-solve, uncover solutions and collaborate in multicultural environments. Too often, New Jersey employers report serious gaps in job applicants’ skills in computer literacy and even in basic academic subjects like English and math. In schools, not all students are taking their educational opportunities seriously enough or working as hard as they should or could, with the result that they are leaving high school without being adequately prepared for college or career. NJCCF works to address this gap in two ways: delivering broad college and career-readiness programs to a variety of stakeholders and developing programs that focus on a smaller number of students and teachers.

Making it easy for schools to adopt Deeper Learning. NJCCF recognized that schools would be much more likely to incorporate Deeper Learning if they were given the tools and resources they needed—with the flexibility to add it to their lesson plans in their own ways. To meet this need, NJCCF developed a series of products and programs that could be purchased or accessed by schools.

Once developed, these “products” require a low-level of commitment and investment from New Jersey businesses, while yielding a significant return for schools and students. Over the years, Chamber staff has provided additional support by promoting the offerings and providing fundraising and grant assistance to schools. NJCCF’s award-winning programs are currently being used by over 500 schools in New Jersey and other states. Enrollments in non-required courses such as Physics, Trigonometry and AP/IB courses, and in associated tests are skyrocketing. Products include:

- **The LearnDoEarn Student Achievement System:** This curriculum presents data about the competitive worlds of college admissions and job acquisition and is designed to inspire teens to work harder in school. The program includes engaging classroom presentations, online games, parent videos, worksheets and reward credentials. It

Quick Facts: New Jersey

- More than 80% of New Jersey jobs require some postsecondary education or training. (Source: [Achieve](#))
- The average graduation rate for first-time, full-time New Jersey freshmen at community colleges is only 17%. (Source: [College Board Advocacy & Policy Center](#))
- At 4-year colleges in New Jersey, only 40% of students graduate on time. (Source: [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#))

The State Chamber in New Jersey is working to solve the state’s educational challenges by:

- Advocating for effective education policies
- Developing engaging programs for students, teachers, and parents
- Designing programs that integrate business volunteers with diverse expertise

focuses on three main areas: the importance of academic achievement, how to remain employable and financial literacy. Business simulations like The Hiring Game bring Deeper Learning to classrooms, as students role play as managers, make hiring decisions and offering signing bonuses to preferred candidates. In doing so, they learn what employers demand.

- **Ready for College and Career? Mobile App:** This free app assesses the college and/or career readiness of students in grades 8-11 with surveys that review courses completed and skills learned in the previous school year.
- **AlmostRealProducts.com:** This very real website for a fictitious company has applications, tests and surveys that simulate the job application process and provide instantaneous scores. Through using this product, high school students or adult learners and job seekers can become familiar with employer expectations and get feedback about what they still need to learn for a range of jobs.

Giving Students (and Teachers) Hands-On Experiences.

NJCCF also matches students up with hands-on, real-world experiences that make future college and career plans a reality. Business volunteers serve various roles in the deployment of these programs, and often help offset costs to schools.

- **The College*Career*Ready Academy:** This five-day residential program brings students to New Jersey colleges or universities to demonstrate what higher learning institutions and employers expect from applicants. Students leave with customized plans for optimal high school outcomes and an increased understanding of what colleges and the world will expect.
- **Remote Internship Experience (RIExperience):** As off-site interns, students are asked to develop and implement a social entrepreneurship project in their schools or neighborhoods that must make measurable improvements in the lives of other students, younger children, adults, animals or to the environment. Projects are overseen by business volunteers, and members of the team with the winning project receive bonuses. Students who complete this experience can add it to their resume and receive a letter of recommendation from a Chamber executive.
- **Professional Development:** As teachers are key to students' success in the classroom, NJCCF hosts eight workshops each year for teachers to learn about workforce trends. After the workshops, teachers go back to their classrooms with Deeper Learning products, such as the LearnDoEarn materials.

Partnerships for Deeper Learning

The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Foundation partners with local businesses, Foundations, school districts and colleges and universities throughout the state to offer Deeper Learning activities. For example:

- NJCCF works with more than 500 schools in New Jersey.
- Six New Jersey colleges and universities host College *Career Ready* Academies.
- 19 corporate sponsors funded the development of LearnDoEarn products.
- The NJ Business Leadership Network Steering Committee comprises nine of the state's prominent employers.
- Dozens of businesses are involved in Deeper Learning projects in New Jersey.



The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce
FOUNDATION

Deeper Learning uses interactive techniques such as project-based learning and real-world application to engage students in core academics and build the skills they need for success in college and career.

Your Chamber can prepare the future workforce for success in a globally competitive economy by building partnerships across sectors that help students become innovative, collaborative and flexible employees.

Visit NJChamberFoundation.org to learn more.